

**Amendments to the Claims:**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

**Listing of Claims:**

What is claimed is:

1. (currently amended) A method for providing driver-independent, printer-independent page manipulation options in a printing system through a page-independent spool file index, said method comprising:
  - reading a spool data file for a document;
  - creating a Page-Independent Spool File (PISF) index file that is distinct from said spool data file, but based on data in said spool data file, wherein said PISF index file comprises a first link to said spool data file, wherein said first link identifies a first portions of said spool data file required to print a first independently-formatted page-specific units ~~corresponding to each page~~ of said document;
  - manipulating said PISF index file, after creation of said PISF index file, to effect a document page format manipulation option, wherein said document page format manipulation option is selected from the group consisting of page order, page copies, page scaling and page placement, thereby producing a manipulated PISF index file; and

using a print processor customized to use said manipulated PISF index  
file, generating printer-ready data from portions of said spool data file  
identified by said manipulated PISF index file.

2. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 further comprising providing a user interface for user manipulation of said PISF index file, after creation of said index file, to effect said document page format manipulation option.
3. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said manipulating comprises re-ordering of pages in said document.
4. (currently amended) The method of claim ~~1~~2 wherein said user manipulation is performed via a spooler user interface.
5. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said PISF index file is created by a process that is independent of the process that created said spool data file.
6. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said PISF index file is created by a modified print processor.
7. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said PISF index file is stored independently of said spool data file.

8. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said PISF index file is created by a print system component other than the component that creates said spool data file.
9. (previously presented) The method of claim 1 wherein said manipulation of said PISF index file comprises changing collation options.
10. (currently amended) A method for performing document formatting options in a printing system, said method comprising:
  - manipulating a PISF index file to effect document formatting, wherein said document formatting comprises a document page format manipulation option, wherein said document page format manipulation option is selected from the group consisting of page order, page copies, page scaling and page placement, after creation of said PISF index file, wherein said PISF index file comprises a first link to a spool data file, wherein said first link identifies a first portion of said spool data file required to print a first independently-formatted page-specific units corresponding to ~~each~~ a page of a said document, wherein said first independently-formatted page-specific units ~~are~~ is based on document-wide, persistent, page formatting data in a said spool data file, thereby producing a manipulated PISF index file; and

using a print processor customized to use said manipulated PISF index file, generating printer-ready data from portions of said spool data file identified by said manipulated PISF index file.

11. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said manipulating comprises changing the order of a page in said document.
12. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said manipulating comprises changing collation options for said document.
13. (previously presented) The method of claim 10 wherein said manipulating is accomplished through a print assistant between a driver and a printer.
14. (currently amended) A method for obtaining page-independent print data in a printing system, said method comprising:
  - reading a PISF index file that is separate from a spool data file, wherein said PISF index file comprises a first link to said spool data file, wherein said first link identifies a first portion of said spool data file required to print a first independently-formatted, page-specific units derived from document-wide, persistent, page formatting data in said spool data file;
  - and
  - using a print processor customized to use said PISF index file, accessing data indexed in said first independently-formatted units to form a print job.

15. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein said PISF index file is produced by a print processor.
16. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein said PISF index file is produced by a spooler.
17. (original) The method of claim 14 wherein said PISF index file is produced by a print system component in a print system between a driver and a printer.
18. (currently amended) A printing system with driver-independent, printer-independent document formatting, said system comprising:
  - a reader for reading a spool data file for a document;
  - an indexer for converting document-wide, persistent, page formatting data in said spool data file into a page-independent spool file (PISF) index file comprising a first link to said spool data file, wherein said first link identifies a first portion of said spool data file required to print a first independently-formatted, page-specific unit; and
  - a customized print processor capable of interfacing with said PISF index file to generate printer-ready data from portions of said spool data file identified in said PISF index file.

19. (currently amended) A computer-readable medium comprising computer-executable instructions for creating a printer-ready data, said instructions comprising the acts of:

reading a spool data file for a document;

creating a Page-Independent Spool File (PISF) index file that is distinct from said spool data file, but based on data in said spool data file, wherein said PISF index file comprises a first link to said spool data file, wherein said first link identifies a first portions of said spool data file required to print a first independently-formatted page-specific units ~~corresponding to each page~~ of said document;

manipulating said PISF index file, after creation of said PISF index file, to effect a document page format manipulation option, wherein said document page format manipulation option is selected from the group consisting of page order, page copies, page scaling and page placement, thereby producing a manipulated PISF index file; and using a print processor customized to use said manipulated PISF index file, generating printer-ready data from portions of said spool data file identified by said manipulated PISF index file.

20. (canceled)